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ABSTRACT

This paper assesses how French and English elementary school teachers have responded to broad, radical educational policy changes affecting individual teachers and schools. The paper uses findings from two linked studies, the Primary Assessment Curriculum and Experience (PACE) project in England and the Primary Teachers and Policy Change (STEP) project in France, and compares them with base-line data collected as part of the BRISTAIX project in both countries between 1984 and 1987 before the reforms took place. Since reform in France was towards more decentralization and reform in England was towards much greater central control, the paper provides comparative insights into teachers' reactions to imposed changes which challenge their professional assumptions. The analysis concludes that despite some important differences between French and English teachers, for both sets of teachers the reality of change lies not in the adoption of particular pedagogic approaches or working practices but in the more gradual process of evolution in professional ideology itself. In particular teachers have clear but potentially rather different professional ideologies which inform their work. Such teachers' ideologies change over time, and while some change in ideologies is likely to be the result of policy changes, this is likely to be less significant than evolving professional judgment concerning priorities. (JB)

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TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS:

TEACHERS' RESPONSE TO POLICY CHANGES IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE

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ED 380 463

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In both England and France, primary education provision has recently been subject to radical change. In both countries these changes have been imposed by central government on individual teachers and schools. This paper will report findings from two linked studies - The Primary Assessment Curriculum and Experience (PACE) project in England and the Primary Teachers and Policy Change (STEP) project in France. (Both projects are funded by the British Economic and Social Research Council.)

This paper compares current findings with base-line data collected as part of the BRISTAIX project in both countries between 1984 and 1987 before the reforms took place. These data investigated primary teachers' conceptions of their teaching role to establish how far teachers' priorities and ways of working have been affected by the reforms. Given the very different emphasis of the policy initiatives in the two countries - towards more decentralisation in France and towards much greater central control in England, the paper provides valuable comparative insights into teachers' reactions to imposed changes which challenge their professional assumptions. More generally it sheds light on how the management of change within an education system may be more effectively accomplished.

1. Introduction

We live in a time of growing international competition for markets; a time when Governments around the world are recognising the urgent need to raise the overall skill level of their workforce if they are to compete effectively in the ever more technology-driven and technology-dependent business and manufacturing world. The economy's need for workers with new kinds of skill and educational levels sufficient to make them capable of responding effectively to any future changes in the working environment has resulted in a new prominence for education in many societies. The British Government's education and training targets (see inaugural), the French Government's commitment to 80% baccalauréat achievement and the Clinton administration's 'Curriculum 2000' initiative in the United States (Resnick, 1994) are typical examples of the drive to raise the overall level of educational achievement which characterises developed nations at the present time.

How this may best be achieved, however, is a question to which the answers are complex and idiosyncratic, a function of national traditions and culture and the perceived shortcomings of the educational system in question. Regardless of the nature of the changes desired, however, effective implementation of them will inevitably depend on the ability of Governments actually to influence what goes on in the classroom - a reality which is likely to be in large measure a function of teachers' own priorities; of their willingness and ability to implement the changes in question.

'On ne change pas la société par décret,' wrote Crozier in 1970 but there seems little evidence of this lesson being learned by policy-makers, even in the traditionally highly-centralised French education system to which Crozier was referring, let alone in the potentially more problematic context of systems with higher levels of local control. How far teachers do, in reality, act as the passive conduits of reform in the way many centrally-generated policy initiatives assume, is an empirical question of considerable importance in the successful implementation of change and thus, ultimately, to the achievement of the overall goal of raising educational standards, if such changes are well-conceived.

It is this empirical reality which is explored in this paper. By drawing upon a comparative study of two education systems, England and France, both of which have been the subject

of major education policy reforms in recent years, it is possible to identify what may be similar factors influencing the way in which teachers respond to imposed changes in the two countries despite the very different substance of the reforms in each system. Moreover, for the countries being studied - England and France, extensive base-line data already exist as a result of previous studies (Broadfoot and Osborn, 1993) conducted before the reforms, against which can be calibrated the extent of any changes in professional perspective which have subsequently taken place. In both the countries in question, the substance of the reforms was such as to challenge the fundamental professional perspectives of the teachers concerned - in France the pressure towards a more collaborative way of working and a more individualised pedagogy; in England a quite opposite emphasis embodied in the imposition of a national curriculum and explicit expectations of achievement. In each case these constituted a requirement for teachers to change, not only their practice, but long-held beliefs concerning what and how to teach. Thus the paper seeks to establish how far the reforms have been successful in influencing teachers' priorities and ways of working and, in the light of this, to draw some conclusions concerning how the management of change within an education system may be most effectively accomplished. In addition, it sheds light on the particular contribution which can be made by comparative studies of policy change and implementation can make in helping to distil insights into the more generic features of 'what makes teachers tick' from the mass of more specific substantive detail.

2. The Reforms

a) England

In 1988, the British Government passed the Education Reform Act. This Act gave the Secretary of State for education more than 200 new powers - notably in the areas of curriculum assessment and finance. The Act directly attacked the power of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) by devolving responsibility for their own budget directly to schools, including within this allocation funding for many of the responsibilities previously undertaken directly by the LEA, such as in-service training and inspection. Schools henceforth were to 'purchase' the services they needed from suppliers - a manifestation of the market ideology informing the provision of a range of Government services. Schools could go further and choose to 'opt out' from LEA control in favour of direct central Government funding. Within the increasingly isolated school, teachers were faced with implementing a National Curriculum based on detailed programmes of study for defined 'core' and 'foundation' subjects. The pre-specified attainment targets in each of these subjects formed the basis for a national assessment framework incorporating regular teacher assessment plus standard assessment tasks at the end of each 'key stage' of 7, 11, 14 and 16. This assessment framework formed the basis of detailed annual reporting to parents as well as more formal assessment results which were to be aggregated across schools and LEAs at the end of the key stage. Thus teachers were faced with quite new curriculum requirements which prompted them individually and collectively to find ways of coping with the new requirements, especially the emphasis on individual subjects. The practical implications of assessment, in terms of collecting and recording the necessary information, as well as imposing a massive bureaucratic workload, represented a fundamental contradiction to English primary teachers' existing conceptions of the role of assessment. Testimony to the strength of their opposition is provided by the almost complete boycott of standardised testing across the whole of England in 1993 and its continuation in a more limited form in 1994.

b) France

Policy change in France would seem to be developing in a different direction. Deliberately moving away from the structures of a centralised system the 'Loi d'Orientation sur l'Education', 1989, required that there should be more flexibility in the system to allow for

individual differences between children - 'il s'agit de mettre plus résolument l'enfant au coeur du système éducatif' (Les Cycles à l'Ecole Primaire, *Ministère de l'Education Nationale*, 1991, p.12). It also stipulated that more consideration should be given to the local situation.

To enable these aims to be achieved, the reform initiated three major changes. Firstly, schools were to be organised into two 'Cycles', each comprising three years of study: the 'Cycle des Apprentissages Fondamentaux', and the 'Cycle d'Approfondissement', the first cycle consisting of the last year of 'Maternelle' school (5-6 years) and the CP and CE1 of primary school. The second cycle separated CE2 from its first year of 'Cours Elémentaires' and included CM1 and CM2. Each cycle could be extended to a fourth year if local conditions required it. The Cycle structure had the following consequences: the former system of 'redoublement' could no longer be justified; children's different rates of learning had to be taken into consideration and teaching had to concentrate more on the individual child - known as 'la pédagogie individualisée'.

The second main requirement of the reform was concerned with assessment. Specific skills were to be assessed using diagnostic tests which would reveal whether these skills had been acquired, were in the process of being acquired or had not yet been acquired. It was seen as a fundamental part of the work in 'Cycles' - 'un instrument indispensable à la mise en place de la nouvelle politique des cycles à l'école primaire' (preface of Aide à l'Evaluation des Elèves, *Ministère de l'Education National*). The information had to be recorded in a 'livret scolaire', which would follow the child throughout his school career, and would enable teachers to follow the development of the pupils' skills and thus plan their teaching strategies accordingly.

The third and final proposal of the reform was the introduction of a 'Project d'Ecole' into the school curriculum. By assessing the particular needs of the children in any one school, the teachers were to organise a scheme of work of several years' duration which would enable the children to develop in the required direction. It introduced new concepts such as 'décloisonnement' and 'intervenants extérieurs', the aim of the 'Project d'Ecole' being to focus on the problem of relating national objectives to a local situation.

The essential aims of enabling children to achieve the standards set down for any particular year in the programme of study laid down by the Ministry of Education remained the same as before the reform, but the reform required French teachers to work together in a way that had not been necessary before. It was also requiring of them that they change their style of teaching which had to become more 'individualisée' and 'active'. Finally, teachers' workloads were also increased by the paperwork involved in the new schemes of assessment.

Following the argument made at the beginning of the paper that effective reform will, in practice, depend on change being effected in teachers' own professional perspectives, we explore in what follows the effect these very different policy changes have had on teachers' perceptions and priorities in the two countries. As a starting point, we draw on data collected from the 'Bristaix' study, which documented French and English primary teachers' professional perspectives during the mid 1980s, prior to these reforms. As such, these findings serve as base-line data for the enquiry.

3. French and English Teachers prior to the Reforms

The Bristaix study, conducted jointly by teams from the University of Bristol, UK, and from the University d'Aix en Provence, in France, (Broadfoot, Gilly, Osborn and Brücher, 1993) documented the strong commitment of teachers in both countries to their pupils.

For the French, this commitment took the form of concern, in the first instance, about academic progress and successful completion of the year by each pupil, although the

longer-term inculcation of skills needed for adult life also figured significantly. For the English, the commitment was much broader, embracing children's social and emotional development as well as their academic progress, and including also a concern to promote enjoyment of the learning process on a day-to-day basis.

The study identified three broad factors which characterised teachers' overall feelings about their job: idealism, realism and 'social openness'. It found that both sets of teachers had no illusions about the difficulties of teaching - the lack of value placed upon it by society, the lack of resources, the very nature of the 'job' itself - and yet they retained their fundamental commitment to children and to the 'vocational' aspect of teaching. Where the populations differed, as might be anticipated, was with respect to their openness to outside influences.

With regard to other sources of influence of which teachers were aware, both groups appeared to rate personal experience, their pupils and their own study as important, with professional training rated as relatively unimportant. Within this broad consensus, the English teachers saw the school - in the shape of the head, colleagues and participation in extracurricular activities and their own ideology - as important influences, whereas for French teachers it was the extra-institutional influences of the inspector and the union which were, predictably, more significant.

As well as the variety of subtle influences that affected teachers, there were the more direct sources of constraint and control which also affected teachers' practice. English teachers, as might have been expected, appeared at the time of the study to enjoy much greater freedom in this respect even in the central matter of curriculum content in the core subjects of mathematics and language. Such freedom may be, in part, why English teachers appeared to take a much more democratic view of teaching than their French counterparts, being prepared to be more open to a wide range of outside contacts and influences which they allowed to impinge on their professional practice.

There were no systematic differences in the local environment which modified these national typifications or altered the pride of place given by both groups of teachers to the internal responsibility that centred on self and pupils, rather than the external focus of school, parents, system and society. Surprisingly, however, it was the more egocentric French teacher, sure of her goals and not accustomed to looking for institutional support, who was less likely to feel obligated to other members of the education system in a sense of formal accountability. Her accountability to her pupils and to her own sense of professionalism was expressed in fulfilling the system's expectations. There was no need for another language, another channel of communications.

4. Findings from PACE and STEP

The Primary Assessment, Curriculum and Experience (PACE) study is being conducted by the University of Bristol (England) and the University of the West of England. Also funded by the ESRC, its purpose is to examine the impact of the 1988 Education Act's provisions concerning curriculum and assessment reforms on primary school teachers and pupils in England. The study involves a sample of 48 schools drawn from eight nationally-representative LEAs, with a sub-sample of nine schools selected for more intensive classroom studies. A number of the questionnaire and interview questions used in the PACE project were designed to match those of the 'Bristaix' study in order to provide the comparability for a study of change in teachers' perspectives.

A third ESRC-funded study - Systems, Teachers and Educational Practice (STEP) - completes the picture in that it is currently collecting data on French primary teachers post the 1989 Jospin reform. This study has also been designed to be comparable with the earlier Bristaix project by using some of the same questions and so is able to provide an explicit documentation of any changes that may have occurred in teachers' professional

priorities. STEP also incorporates some new questions which were generated as part of the English 'PACE' study, so that the two studies together form a rich source of comparative data on the nature of any changes that have taken place in primary teachers' priorities and practice in the two countries and is the basis for generating explanations as to the causes of any such changes. Whilst Bristaix, PACE and STEP all address both what teachers say about their practice - using interviews and questionnaires - and what teachers actually do in the classroom - using various kinds of observation - only the data concerning teachers' views are drawn on in this paper.

Accountability

The central rationale behind the English 1988 Education Reform Act was to make schools and teachers more controlled by the dual mechanism of increasing central control of the curriculum ('policed' by the imposition of national assessments) and by the creation of a market force based on increasing the power of choice of consumers (ie pupils and their parents). One of the main purposes of the French reforms was to make schools and teachers more responsive to their local communities.

Table 1 suggests this has not happened, rather that the overall level of English teachers' sense of professional obligation has declined - they feel a reduced sense of moral obligation as professionals whilst that of the French teachers has increased.

Looking at each source of accountability in turn, both French and English teachers feel that they are in the main accountable to themselves with a slight increase in accountability being shown since the reforms in each national context and English teachers feeling more accountable to themselves than French teachers.

Both sets of teachers feel very accountable to their pupils; the French percentage rising from 69.5% to 78.3% whilst the English percentage decreases from 81.8% to 78.5%. This move away from accountability to pupils by English teachers is matched by their decrease in accountability towards society - 31.7% to 13.5%. French teachers' rise in accountability towards their pupils is also matched by an increase in accountability towards society - 13.3% to 30.0%. The reforms seem to be influencing French teachers towards their 'consumers' and English teachers away from their 'consumers'.

Although parents are encouraged to play a greater role in education by the Jospin reform, teachers do not see themselves as being more accountable towards them (16.1% to 17.9%) whereas English teachers do seem to be influenced by the market force of parents as created by the ERA (43.1% to 63.0%). English teachers are aware of their accountability to parents to a much greater extent than French teachers.

Both French and English teachers feel more accountable to their colleagues after the reforms but there was still a large difference between the 2 national contexts post reform (17.9% France; 63.0% England), even though French teachers have been working together more in line with their reform. Although French headteachers have a more important role to play in the school, French teachers do not seem to feel more accountable them, whereas English teachers do feel more accountable to theirs.

TABLE 1 Changes in teachers feeling accountable

	France		England	
Source of accountability	Pre-reform 1985 Bristaix Fr %	Post-reform 1994 STEP %	Pre-reform 1985 Bristaix Eng %	Post-reform 1992 PACE %
Yourself	80.5	82.1	89.4	95.0
Pupils	69.5	78.3	81.8	78.5
Headteacher	3.8	3.9	32.9	56.3
Colleagues	6.9	10.6	24.3	42.8
Parents	16.1	17.9	43.1	63.0
Society	13.3	30.0	31.7	13.5

Source: Bristaix England Summer 1985 - 360 teacher questionnaires
Bristaix France Summer 1985 - 360 teacher questionnaires
PACE Summer 1992 - 92 teacher questionnaires
STEP Spring 1994 - 203 teacher questionnaires

Given that the French reforms were designed to strengthen teachers' ability to use their professional judgement to meet the differing needs of their pupils and the English were designed to reduce the scope for such professional judgement, these data tend to confirm that direct attempts to constrain teachers' professionalism may well be counterproductive in reducing their overall level of commitment instead.

Priorities

Table 2 shows changes in teachers' priorities concerning what they want their children to learn. In accordance with the Jospin reforms, teachers see that the objective of arousing children's intrinsic interest has become more of a priority (44.4% to 58.9%), English teachers see this as less of a priority than it was (67.1% to 53.8%) in line with ERA and a return to a more traditional type of learning. Similarly French teachers see that training children in personal relations and their moral education is more important than it was and English teachers see them both as less important.

Teachers in both national contexts feel that independence and organisation of their own work is in increasing priority in education - a reflection in keeping with the needs of Western society.?

The French returns continued to stress the impatience of academic instruction - the teachers reflect this preoccupation (40.2% increasing to 68.6%); in contrast and despite the urge of 'back to basics' English teachers see it as less of a priority - 52.2% to 46.7%.

TABLE 2 Changes in teachers' views of their priorities with children

	France		England	
	Pre-reform 1985 Bristaix Fr %	Post-reform 1994 STEP %	Pre-reform 1985 Bristaix Eng %	Post-reform 1992 PACE %
Instruction/ academic work	40.2	68.6	55.2	46.7
Moral education	14.7	23.2	27.5	3.1
Training in personal relationships	21.9	20.8	40.1	32.3
Development of intelligence	24.7	60.9	26.4	-
Training of future citizen	11.4	47.3	28.4	-
Arouse an interest in learning	44.4	58.9	67.1	53.8
Children organise their work	27.1	51.7	32.4	49.2
Development of child's potential		33.8	-	45.6
Development of child's personality	30.3	38.6	42.0	-

Source: Bristaix England Summer 1985 - 360 teacher questionnaires
Bristaix France Summer 1985 - 360 teacher questionnaires
PACE Summer 1992 - 92 teacher questionnaires
STEP Spring 1994 - 203 teacher questionnaires

Furthermore, the overall strength of teachers' commitment to their priorities in England seems generally lower than that of their French colleagues, suggesting again perhaps a degree of professional demoralisation and a growing unwillingness to accept responsibility for matters over which they have no control.

Teaching Approach

Although table 3 does not give an historical perspective, it shows how teachers feel they have changed in their practice since the reforms. Both French and English teachers' responses showed that the aspect of pedagogy which had most changed in their minds since the reforms was Assessment Skills: 83.7% of English teachers and 69.1% of French teachers gave it more importance.

The Jospin reforms appear to have had an impact on that nearly half of the French teachers (43.0%) felt they were reflecting an awareness of the importance of a more child-centred pedagogy in their views about classroom organisation; knowledge of children (33.3%) and their relations with children (29.5%). However, French teachers had not been much influenced by considerations of different teaching skills - only 23.2%. English teachers saw classroom organisation as an important difference from before the reforms (44.6%) and teaching skills (37.0%) but not so much their knowledge of and relationships with children, (33.3% and 29.5% respectively). Whilst this may be in part an indication of a move towards more whole-class teaching, the PACE study as a whole suggests teachers feel they have less time for individual contact with children and hence for a more individualised pedagogy (Pollard, Broadfoot, Croll, Osborn and Abbott, 1994).

By contrast, English teachers were clearly aware that subject knowledge was now more important (72/8), reflecting the introduction of the National Curriculum. This aspect was not part of the Jospin reforms and only 7.7% of French teachers thought it to have gained in importance.

Thus, in keeping with the substance of the two reforms between three quarters of English teachers and two thirds of French teachers thought that assessment skills were now more important; nearly half of French and English teachers had been influenced by different co-ordinations of classroom organisation; and nearly three quarters of English teachers had been affected by the new emphasis on subject skills.

TABLE 3 The importance of different aspects of pedagogy - the percentage of French and English teachers stating that they gave the following aspects more importance since the reforms

	England 1994 %	France 1994 %
Clear aims	67.4	37.7
Teaching skills	37.0	23.2
Assessment skills	83.7	69.1
Subject knowledge	72.8	7.7
Classroom organisation	44.6	43.0
Knowledge of children	16.3	33.3
Relations with children	10.9	29.5
Maintaining order	15.2	13.5

Source: PACE Spring 1994 - 92 teacher interviews
STEP Spring 1994 - 203 teacher questionnaires

However, in general, only 25% of French teachers thought their approach to teaching had changed substantially with a further 19% who felt they had changed a little. Almost a third felt they had not changed at all. Almost a third felt they had not changed at all. Perhaps more significant is the finding that only 23% associated the changes that they had made with the reform, 17.4% attributed the changes to personal reasons and the needs of children in a changing society. As one teacher who had been teaching in the same school for 24 years commented:

> 'Mon enseignement a heureusement évolué en 25 ans; plus de prises en compte des besoins de chacun, moins de cours magistraux (teacher's underlining), mais bein evant la réforme Jospin'.

Another teacher clearly expressed his reasons for having changed his teaching style and approach:

> 'Elles évoluent en fonction de l'expérience et des besoins des enfants'.

A third teacher revealed what appears to be an ongoing situation of change, irrespective of the actual reform:

> 'La réforme Jospin a confirmé certaines des mes idées'.

In what ways have teachers changed their approach to teaching? Of those that replied that they had changed (whether due to the reform or not), the area of change which they most

frequently mentioned was to do with child-centred methods. 19.3% said that they were using more child-centred methods. One teacher thought she was using:

> 'une pédagogie differenciée suivant le niveau des élèves de la classe'

Another thought that children were treated differently:

> '(il y a) plus de responsabilités données à l'enfant'.

The next most refquently identified source of change was the nature of assessment - 11.1% of the teachers referring to it. A headteacher summarised her position:

> 'Plus de changement en ce qui concerne les conceptions de la pédagogie. Par contre les techniques d'évaluation ont apporté un léger changement'.

Teachers referred to the innovations of the 'Cycles' - 9.7% - and the increased involvement with colleagues - 5.3% - as sources of change:

> 'La mise en place des cycles a forcé les gens à se rencontrer, à échanger des idées, à essayer de travailler ensemble'.

A headteacher alluded to the extra workload:

> 'Ma tâche d'enseignement et de directeur s'est alourdie considerérablement: responsable de project d'école, soutien aux élèves faibles, sans aucune compensation'.

The effect of reforms

Table 4 gives the overall judgement of teachers concerning the reforms. Although only a small minority felt that the effects of the reforms, overall, would be bad about a third of teachers in each country anticipated no effect.

TABLE 4 Teachers' views of the effect of reforms on schools

	England 1994 %	France 1994 %
For the better	39.2	34.8
Little change	34.8	32.9
For the worse	14.1	7.2

Source: PACE Spring 1994 - 92 teacher interviews
STEP Spring 1994 - 203 teacher questionnaires

Although there have been significant shifts in both practice and underlying perspectives on the part of at least some teachers in both countries, there is a significant number who do not feel they have changed or will change. In seeking to understand the process of policy implementation, such evidence of lack of change is arguably as significant as evidence of change itself. Equally, it is important to elucidate to what extent any such changes are indeed a result of policy directives rather than the teacher's own professional response to, for example, the perceived needs of pupils or to particular characteristics of the working environment.

For many French teachers, the notion of reform evoked a profound cynicism - a cynicism apparently born out of the large number of such initiatives in recent decades - a phenomenon that Weiler (1988) has termed 'reformitis' in arguing that each new Minister seeks to initiate a particular reform in order to make his mark - a view shared by some teachers:

> 'Les ministres passent, les enseignements restent et évoluent à leur rythme'
>
> 'Je pense qu'il y a déjà eu trop de réformes et cette réforme est une réforme de plus'
>
> 'Les ministres passent et pensent tout changer'
>
> 'Il y a trop de réformes' (School B)
>
> 'Les réformes - il y en a tellement' (School C)

To the world-weariness of many experienced teachers in this respect must be added the cynicism born of experience concerning how much life in the classroom is likely to respond to any such reform:

> 'Il y a les belles idées: et il y a ce qui se passe en classe' (School D)
>
> 'mais, ce n'est qu'un rêve - un beau rêve ...' (School J)

Teachers themselves identified a number of practical barriers to change - class sizes too large, children who were too undisciplined, too much preparation, lack of suitable resources, and even buildings:

> 'La réforme Jospin changera les écoles pour le pire. Si on ne nous donne pas plus de moyens: nombre d'élèves, réseau d'aide extérieure à la classe, formation des instituteurs, réelles concertations avec tous les partenaires'

Lack of training and guidance left a significant number genuinely unclear how to implement a more individualised pedagogy - an ignorance reinforced in one instance by the response to a request for guidance from one inspector:

> 'Vous êtes les pédagogues' (School I)

To such practical hurdles must be added the arguably much more profound barriers of ideology and perceived constraint. In terms of the latter, teachers maintained many pressures which inhibited them from changing - the expectations of pupils in the classroom and of their parents for particular activities to be taking place; the fear of disadvantaging pupils going into Collège - in short, the conservatism rooted in the familiar pattern of French education. Against this, the sanctions that could be mobilised to enforce change for civil servants only vulnerable to misconduct charges, are weak indeed - namely, the occasional visit of the inspector. Add to this lack of sanctions to enforce reform, the professional convictions of what it is to be a teacher rooted in more than a hundred years of tradition, it is easy to understand why many teachers respond arrogantly to central directives which tell them what to do:

> 'Je n'attends pas des agitations médiatiques pour peaufiner mes techniques'
> 'Qu'est-ce qu c'est la réforme Jospin?' asks one teacher (School I)
>
> 'On n'a pas besoin de réformes,' argues another (School C)

expressing the view that what teachers need is not to change their practice but to have more resources in order that they can be more effective:

> 'J'essaie de différencier plus ma pédagogie, de l'adopter à chaque enfant. Ce n'est pas toujours facile avec *les moyens dont on dispose*'

> 'Assez peu (de changement): peut-être par manque d'information précises et réalistes'

In England, the more coercive character of the reforms provoked an initially intense demoralisation and even anger of the kind illustrated in the following quotations:

The Year 2 teacher also felt very strongly:

> 'I can see no bright areas of the job whatsoever. Even the simple pleasures of seeing children achieve things. It's more a case of 'Oh well, I can cross that off my list, mark that box' and it's not a personal development shared between two people. It's just another task our of the way. It's becoming easier in a sense because you start the day, you know exactly what you're going to do, but then one of the joys as well as one of the nightmares of infant teaching was you didn't know how the day was going to develop.'

This teacher would not now choose teaching as a job,

> 'which is a shame because at times I've enjoyed it. I've realised that I'm good at it, and I've sort of round out what I was meant to be, and it's very disheartening that I'm not allowed to enjoy what I'm doing any more. But, having said that, you know, when I wake up in the morning and think, 'Would I rather go to work in a library, would I rather go to work in an office, would I rather go to work in a school?' School comes down last on the list.

For some of these teachers, then, the satisfactions derived from teaching were ebbing away, while the frustrations were increasing. In terms of the values regarding commitment to role, teachers were being propelled towards alienation or instrumentalism rather than their previously expressive and moral commitment to their roles. If the heavy investment of these teachers' selves in teaching (Nias, 1989) does not continue to pay off in terms of rewards from their work, then we must ask ourselves whether committed teachers will continue to stay in teaching, and, if they do, whether their effort and motivation will decline. Certainly there is some evidence that such classroom teachers are no longer seeking to move up the career structure to become deputies and headteachers (Campbell et al., 1991)

On the other hand, as the National Curriculum became more accepted, two of the nine classroom teachers interviewed in 1992 found that the sense of constraint they had experienced had begun to lessen as they became more familiar with the National Curriculum and had the confidence to deviate from it where they felt it appropriate. For example a Year 2 teacher argued:

> 'Now, I don't necessarily think, 'Oh, I shouldn't do that.' I don't feel the restraint in that sense now. I don't feel that it's wrong to go off on to something which maybe has been inspired by the children, whereas before (ie in the first few months of the National Curriculum) I used to think, 'I don't have time to do that.' I'm not so frightened at going off on a tangent now. I feel as long as it's worthwhile ... that the children can get as much from going off the topic for a while ... So much is covered over and over again. Practically everything is repetition in different ways.

For this teacher, rather than a lessening of enjoyment and fulfilment in work, there had merely been a change in the gains she felt. She now derived satisfaction from working out new creative ideas for meeting the National Curriculum requirements. 'Personally I find it very stimulating because I look at documents and I look at the things that are required and I try to think of ideas and ways of doing things that meet the requirement ... I find it very challenging to work within a frame but at the same time I want to be free to go outside it to some degree it I think it's worthwhile'.

A second teacher, working in the inner-city context argued that:

> 'Before, I felt our goals were becoming woolly and that we had run out of steam with the National Curriculum as I see fit ... sometimes it's (the National Curriculum) easy to assimilate and sometimes difficult. (The National Curriculum) as a whole is welcome but it's hard work.

These teachers' responses suggest again that some teachers were gaining the confidence to interpret and actively to mediate the National Curriculum in ways that suited their own professional ends.

Conclusion

This paper documents major differences in the response to central Government attempts at reform on the part of teachers in the two countries under study. In England, a tradition of professional openness leading to a high degree of apparent compliance, this in turn resulting in a very substantially increased workload and the undertaking of new professional tasks such as formal assessment. In France, by contrast, our data document a high degree of more or less explicit resistance, reflecting a much higher level of professional confidence in a teaching body traditionally subject to few external controls.

Yet despite these rather different stances in relation to the imposition of change, the underlying reality is rather more similar. As the PACE data clearly demonstrates, despite a range of more or less superficial changes in their practice, English teachers have successfully mediated many of the new requirements so that they can continue to pursue the same underlying professional values rooted in responding to the individual needs and interests of each child in a very broadly-based way. For both sets of teachers the reality of change lies not in the adoption of particular pedagogic approaches or working practices. Rather, it inheres in the more gradual process of evolution in professional ideology itself, the educational values which inform the meaning of pedagogic acts and determine teachers' own priorities. In both countries, teachers are being faced with the challenge of the changing world that their pupils must be prepared to meet and the effects of these changes on pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the classroom.

The set of comparative and historical studies reported here testify clearly to three key points in relation to understanding teachers and change.

1. That teachers have clear but potentially rather different professional ideologies which inform their work;

2. That such teachers' ideologies do change over time;

3. That while some such change in ideologies is likely to be the result of policy changes, this is likely to be less significant than evolving professional judgement concerning priorities.

In England, teachers have certainly changed aspects of their practice but haven't yet fundamentally altered their ideologies. However, in France , though some teachers have - for a variety of reasons - changed their rhetoric, this does not necessarily reflect a change

in their fundamental beliefs either, as the limited extent of change in practice would appear to bear out

It follows that genuine reforms are likely only when they are the product of changes in teachers' own professional values. Such change is unlikely to be achieved by the imposition of centrally-derived directives It requires rather a change strategy that builds on and, if appropriate, challenges teachers' own values such that they themselves become part of the policy debate and own both the problem and the proposed solution.

Perhaps this last teacher's view expresses a commonly held view on the nature of the changes involved:

> 'Mes conceptions n'ont pas changé, mes techniques ont évolué'.

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